



Speaker of the House Shannon Dailey, foreground, makes a point about traffic cameras as Victoria Downey listens during a legislative model day Friday in high school government with Steve McGrew. — Press/Mira Schmitt-Cash

## Students debate bills with help of IA agency

Traffic cameras, cell phone use debated by students

**By Mira Schmitt-Cash**  
Staff Writer

"Senator Travis' amendment was already voted down," President of the Senate Dalton Majewski said, echoing a statement by subcommittee member Sen. Kerrigan Krueger.

With that ruling, Majewski ended debate on Sen. Travis Johnson's amendment on general emergency use of cell phones in schools.

They'd already discussed cellphone use for family emergencies, Krueger pointed out.

Johnson countered that general emergencies hadn't been discussed.

The decision whether to

continue debate fell to President Majewski, Kae Coppock, with the Legislative Services Agency, said.

Majewski made his ruling.

Steve McGrew's government class opened session Friday in order to debate two bills during a model legislature day that has been a tradition at Charles City High School.

The students split into the House and Senate and debated bills concerning who should set rules for cell phone use in schools and how traffic cameras should be used, and the income they generate, divided.

"This is good," actual Iowa Rep. Todd Prichard of Charles City said in a brief visit to the class. "The kids are having to

### Bills

Continued on page 4

## BILLS

Continued from page 1

collaborate and work together as a group. That really is how it works in the statehouse."

Members of the Legislative Services Agency provide legal, fiscal, and informational support to the legislature. Some serve as tour guides at the State Capitol and learn the history of the legislature in doing so.

"We bring that expertise that we really understand the process," Joan Arnett, with the LSA, said, adding, "It's something ... different from the classroom setting." The program was first created for use on the Iowa Communications Network, she said. LSA members have traveled to various schools to help in classroom settings such as this, she said.

Over on the House side, legislators discussed amendments to a proposed traffic camera bill.

Removing cameras monitoring speeding was proposed because a young legislator had read that the speeding cameras can raise the risk of accidents.

(A quick Internet search reveals that the matter is not conclusive.)

Just cameras intended to catch drivers running red lights were left in the bill.

How to split the camera ticket revenue after the camera company took its cut was the next point of discussion.

Dropping speeding cameras would eliminate a large share of the revenue, someone said.

One student per bill was designated as lobbyist.

"We were expected to do a little more background research (and) research different views," Alberto Sveum said. Then the lobbyists represented companies with the information they found.

Sveum represented a cell-phone company, and Jacquelyn Hesse represented a camera company.

Sveum said some people told him he offered them a different viewpoint, "So that helped a little bit," he said.

"I've had a lot of kids tell me over the years that they really enjoyed it," McGrew said of the day. "Not only for the experience in politics, but ... it makes them think critically and tap into their creative juices."